

REMARKS

In the present Office Action, the Examiner rejects claims 1, 2, 6 through 12, 14 through 18, 20, 23, 26, 27, 30, 38, 40, 41 and 43 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,799,327 to Reynolds ("Reynolds"). Claims 13, 21 and 42 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Reynolds in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,469,753 to Klosterman ("Klosterman"), claim 22 stands rejected as obvious over Reynolds in view of Klosterman and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,388,714 to Schein ("Schein"), claim 24 stands rejected as obvious over Reynolds in view of Schein, claims 28 and 29 stand rejected as obvious over Reynolds in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,177,931 to Alexander and claims 44 and 45 stand rejected as obvious over Reynolds in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,772,433 to LaJoie. In addition to the foregoing, the Examiner objects to claims 5 and 39 as being dependent on a rejected base claim, but otherwise allowable, and allows claim 36.

By way of the amendments submitted herewith, Applicants hereby amend claims 1, 5, 6, 8 and 41. Claims 5, 6 and 8 are hereby amended to correct their dependencies in view of the cancellation of claims 3, 4, 16 through 35 and 37 through 40. Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner with regard to his grounds for rejecting the independent claims. In an effort to advance examination and place the claims in condition for allowance, however, Applicants hereby amended claims 1 and 41 (which the Examiner rejects on identical grounds) to incorporate objected to dependent claim 39 and the claims on which it depends. Accordingly, Applicants assert that the pending independent claims are in condition for allowance and allowance is respectfully solicited regarding the same.

The dependent claims of the present application contain additional features that further substantially distinguish the invention of the present application over the prior art of record. Given the Applicants' position on the patentability of the independent claims, however, it is not deemed necessary at this point to delineate such distinctions.

For at least all of the above reasons, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw all rejections, and allowance of all the pending claims is respectfully solicited. To expedite prosecution of this application to allowance, the examiner is invited to call the Applicants' undersigned representative to discuss any issues relating to this application.

Dated: January 5, 2007

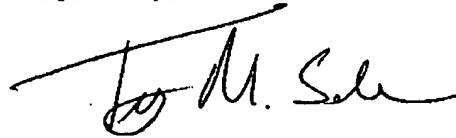
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I hereby certify that the correspondence attached herewith is being deposited this date with the U.S. Postal Service as First Class Mail with sufficient postage addressed to Mail Stop: Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

Matthew L. Kaufman

1/5/07
Date

Respectfully submitted,



Timothy M. Salmon
Reg. No. 54,420
DREIER LLP
499 Park Ave.
New York, New York 10022
Tel : (212) 328-6000
Fax: (212) 328-6001